

1 Polit. Pamphlet vol. 136.

L E T T E R

T O U S

F R O M

O N E O F O U R S E L V E S

[Price Eighteen Pence]



FROM

ONE OF OURSELVES



A  
L E T T E R *K*

T O U S,

FROM

ONE OF OURSELVES,

*Et Majores vestros & posteros cogitate.*

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L O N D O N :

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MDCCLXXVII.



## ERRATA.

Page 7 line 2, *after Spirit of Liberty, add, at that Period, which makes its present Inactivity the more conspicuous and contemptible.*

41 line 2, *for to unpack my Heart, read unpack our Hearts.*

L O N D O N :

MDCCCXXIII.



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A  
LETTER, &c.

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**T**HE Man who writes at this Day, with the Idea of serving his Country, is in reality, unacquainted with the Temper of the Times. The general Disregard and Indifference paid to public Productions, which are the only Source of Information to the People, must fully evince, not only that this Mean is inadequate to its End; but what is still of a more alarming Nature,—that the Country we live in, is so far diseased, that hardly any Remedy can be administered for its Relief.—

The Freedom of the Press, a Privelege obtained by the People with the greatest Difficulty, and yielded up, on the Part of the Crown, with the utmost Reluctance, has been justly ranked in the Constitution, as a chief Barrier and Counterpoise, against the Innovations and Abuses of Government—by it, a Nation is informed; public Papers, in which the public Acts of Government are publicly examined and freely canvassed, circulate throughout the Kingdom, and fall into the Hands of all Ranks of the People; every Individual becomes acquainted how Affairs are carried on, and through its Assistance (as a late Writer observes) “ a whole Nation, as it were, holds a Council “ and deliberates;” a singular Advantage this, unknown and unenjoyed throughout the rest of the Eastern World, which enables the Body of the People, when obliged to move, at a Period of public Danger, to act from Judgment, not Caprice; to have their  
sole



sole Object, the firm Establishment of their Rights and Liberties ; and not as in other Countries, to be made the unhappy Instruments of the Ambition of a few. The Freedom of the Press, considered in another Point of View, as the censorial Power, lodged in the Hands of the People, forms a continual Check to the Views of those entrusted with the public Power, and gives a constant Return to the Constituents of the Kingdom, in what Manner, and often from what Motives, their Representatives have acted in Parliament.—These are Advantages to excite Rôyal Envy ; but it seems a Paradox in Nature, that they should have been disregarded and relinquished, by a People who enjoyed them—Yet such is the Fact, and so fallen are we from Ourselves, as to have become fatally deaf to every Call, which it were either wise or virtuous to attend to ; the Man of Ability now, is wholly employed in securing his Share of the ge-

neral Plunder, while the Man, unable, from inferior Talents, to become a Knave, contentedly enjoys the Luxuries of Life, and wishes for no Alteration in that System, which affords him every Gratification his Appetites can desire; the Activity of the one, and the Neglect of the other, are alike destructive; for, while the public Villain hunts down the Virtue of his Country, it is neither in the lazy Sensualist, nor in the self-sufficient Fool, to check the fatal Pursuit, by rising in her Behalf. In such an advanced State of Degeneracy then, though a *virtuous few* may still survive, yet is it wholly impossible their Efforts can prevail; they may plan, but who is there to execute? They may complain, but who is there to hear them? Alas! the small Relief allowed them, is to disburthen their Grievs to one another, and pay, as to a departing Friend, the last sad Offices, of Tears and Regret, to their expiring Country. At this dread Crisis  
(which



(which is just upon us) what a Crowd of Reflections to a thinking Mind ! England, a Nation hitherto distinguished for a Genius and Temper, peculiar to herself ; blessed as it were, among other Countries, with the exclusive Privilege of being *free* ; a Nation, to which, on that Account, all the World looked up with Wonder and Admiration ; to see her levelled from her Eminence ; becoming a Fellow Bondman with other Countries, and thus compleating the Thralldom of the whole Eastern Hemisphere, is a Sight too pitiable to pass by with Indifference ; a Punishment too severe to be attributed to common guilt ; and too awful, not to strike us with the Idea, that it has been most justly deserved—An Enquiry into the Causes which have produced so dreadful a Calamity, though a Task of Pain and Affliction, yet is indispensably necessary.

The

The natural Prey of \*\*\*\*s, is Mankind, and it has ever been their Aim, to remove all Shelter and Protection, which afforded any Security to the People. By Force or Artifice, too often have they reached their Ends, and it may perhaps be attributed to an Error in the Means, that the People of England, have preserved their Freedom for so long a Time : The Constitution which was not compleatly formed until the Accession of the *Stewart* Family (as the House of Commons, which had been mounting to its Place, by slow Degrees, did not, until that Period, reach its proper Weight and Station) was doomed to suffer many and severe Attacks ; but the happy Unskilfulness which attended that tyrant Race, prolonged its Fate, and reserved its Down-fall for a later Day. Fools, as well as Knaves, they made use of daring Outrages, and open Violations : The Nation became  
alarmed,



alarmed, and exhibited a Freedom of Action, and a Spirit of Liberty. They made a glorious Sacrifice of one of the Family, and expelled the rest.—They shewed the World “ that Nations are not the Property of “ Kings;” but that the Office of Royalty is a public gift; the Conditions on which it is granted, being violated, reverts to the People, from whose Bounty it was received. —Those open Attacks by *force* then, on the Constitution, turned out to those who made them, ineffectual and fatal, “ a Lesson which made future Kings more subtle, not more just;” and which taught them to go a safer, and a surer way to work. It became from this Period, the political Generalship of the Crown, to endeavour a Reduction by Artifice, of that which had been proof against Storm; to try if that hardy Virtue, handed down to us, by our Ancestors for our Preservation, was not to be

be be softened through Luxury, and at length, totally forgotten; and whether by indulging our Appetites and supplying our Vices, we should not at length become degenerate, effeminate and corrupt; in which State, the blow might, with Security, be struck, or rather more properly speaking, that this slow Poison infused into the body of the People, would of itself be equal to the fatal Purpose—such was the Plan (so worthy of Royal Cultivation) that was formed against the Freedom, and the Happiness of a Nation; a Plan replete with Craft and Cruelty, and which waited but for Means to undergo a perfect Trial: Ever ready to engage, so soon as Chance or Industry should supply the Hands of Government with these, no Doubt prevailed of their not being put into Employ; but their Success depended on the Inclination of the People, and so long as Virtue filled the

public Mind, no Room was left for the Admission of Corruption.—When the Remnant of the Stewart Family was sent begging about the World, we all well know the Revolution which took Place; a Revolution glorious in itself, yet attended with a Circumstance, which neglected, or perhaps unnoticed then, was doomed to furnish those Means, of which the Crown was now in search. By the Accession of King William, we became deeply involved in all the Politicks of Europe, which occasioned the Expences of the Nation to rise to so unusual a Degree, that it was not judged adviseable to defray them annually, by Taxes levied within the Year, lest the unaccustomed Weight of them should create Murmurs among the People. Immense Sums of Money were therefore borrowed, for the current Service of the State; and there were raised no more Taxes on the Subject than sufficed to pay the Interest of



the Sums so borrowed : The principal Debt became a new Species of Property, transferable from one Man to another, at any Time, and in any Quantity.—This laid the Foundation of our national Debt, a Plan, which has been so much improved on, by the Ingenuity of *those* who followed, that the annual Interest at this Day, would be nearly sufficient to maintain any War, that any *national Motives*, could require \*.—The Inconveniencies arising from so enormous a Debt, are many and conspicuous ; to defray its Interest, the necessaries of Life are burthened with a heavy Load of Taxes, which are a sensible hurt both to Trade and Manufactures.—The Nation is left, as it were, naked and defenceless, from having all those Resources anticipated and exhausted, which should be reserved for her Defence, in Cases of Danger and Emergency,—yet these last might never happen, and

\* Blackstone's Commentaries, Vol. I.

with regard to the first, while a People were not stinted in Freedom, some Check on the Encrease of Wealth would be submitted to with Chearfulness; but the Inconvenience produced, which has become so fatal in its Tendency, is that, by which the Crown has been supplied with the means of corrupting the People (to quote the Words of Blackstone) “ our national  
 “ Debt and Taxes, have in their natural  
 “ Consequences, thrown such a Weight of  
 “ Power into the executive Scale of Government, as we cannot think was intended by our patriot Ancestors. The  
 “ entire Collection and Management of so  
 “ vast a Revenue, being placed in the  
 “ Hands of the Crown, have given rise to  
 “ such a Multitude of new Offices, created  
 “ by, and removeable at, the Royal Pleasure; that they have extended the Influence of Government to every Corner  
 “ of the Nation. To this may be added

“ the frequent Opportunities of conferring  
 “ particular Obligations, by Preference in  
 “ Loans, Subscriptions, Tickets, Remit-  
 “ tances, and other Money Transactions,  
 “ which will greatly encrease this Influe-  
 “ ence, and that over those Persons, whose  
 “ Attachment, on Account of their Wealth,  
 “ is frequently the most desirable.”

It must appear plain, then, that Govern-  
 ment being thus armed, with all the Powers  
 of Seduction, Integrity in the People, and  
 the strictest Adherence to what they owed  
 themselves and their Posterity, was the  
 only Shield which could afford them Safety  
 and Protection; and that if, by an Indul-  
 gence in Luxury, they suffered themselves  
 to be once thrown off their Guard, an  
 Enemy was at Hand, to take Advantage of  
 their Weakness. An Enemy insidious in  
 itself, and the more dangerous because dis-  
 guised. Whose Plan operated slowly in  
 the



the Beginning, and was hardly felt in taking Root, whose rapid Progress, is within the Memory of us all; and let us blame ourselves, for having hastened its arrival, to almost the last Stage of Perfection.—In the Year 1759, the Nation was busied in a foreign War; the arms of England were victorious in every Quarter of the *Globe*: and the Glory and Successes which attended her, promised ample Compensation for all the Expences she had been at. Our Sovereign was neither fullen, mean, nor obstinate. He was neither bigotted to the narrow Principles of a systematic Education, nor did his Character owe its sole Support to the Credit that was given, for a few domestic Virtues. At the Head of our Affairs, was a Man, competent in Knowledge, and replete with Wisdom; gifted with a greatness of Conception, and an unparalleled dignity of Soul—who appeared, at this Period, in the Meridian of his Glory; a great

great and commanding Luminary, under whose Rays, even those of Royalty were hid.—The Declination, however, of both were near at Hand; the one approached the Limits of his political Existence; the other sunk below the Horizon of Life, and passed into another World:—The Nation having lost a good King, were soon after, deprived of a great Minister.—It was now perceived that the War abroad retarded the Project at home; that the Spirit of the People was to be lulled, not raised; and a Peace was therefore patched up, which stamped us with Disgrace and Ridicule, in the Eyes of all the World. Yet we bore this tamely, and required no return for the loss of our Friends, or the Diminution of our Property. A fatal Symptom, that the Seeds of Dispotism had begun to vegetate.—From this Period, we became assailed in earnest; Luxury, with all her tempting Train, were poured in upon us from every Quarter;

Quarter ; and the Habit of the Constitution became soon fitted to receive without Revolt, all the insidious Poisons which were prepared for her. Quick in Imitation, the People were furnished with a great Example to follow. The Fountain-head became an abundant Spring of Vice. Gracious Pardons were extended to Murderers—The Prayers of Prostitutes were heard—Private Revenge was carried to a mean Excess—Public Honour was ridiculed and broken—Hypocrisy was made a Science. In short, we were supplied with Patterns of every Shape and Size, fashioned and accommodated to every possible Disposition, adapted to all Kinds of Capacities. —The Source being thus tainted, the Infection soon ran through all the Channels of the People.—The \*\*\*\*\* had acquired some able Auxiliaries in the Acquisition of the Scotch. The Means by which these Mercenaries got employed, may be a Mat-



ter of curious Enquiry—Their Chief, who had f \* \* \* \* \* the M \* \* \* \* \*, became Guardian of the S \* \*, and *trained up the Child in the Way he should go*. The Door being thus opened to the Northern Banditti; their Leader, that Curse to England, soon took the Field, with all Scotland at his Heels—from being carefully encouraged, in every Species of Licentiousness, our Men of Rank soon became necessitous, and of Course, not far from being dependant. The Scots, ever ready on the Watch, served as Bawds and Pimps, to forward the great Plan of Prostitution. When a Nobleman or Commoner became shook in his Morals, or hurt in his Fortune, which are ever the Effects of Intemperance and Excess, and began to look out for the Means to support the Continuance of his Pursuits, he was sure to find a fatal Assistant in some treacherous North Briton; having gained his Ear, under the Semblance of a Friend ;  
public

public Virtue was placed in a Point of Ridicule, and the Favour of the Prince, in the highest Point of Advantage. Reputation was held out as a Bubble, and Patriotism as its own Reward—Scruples are easily overcome, on the Side where Inclination lies ; and, when the Pursuit of Virtue once becomes a Matter of Deliberation, a small Thing turns the Scale, and Virtue is forced to kick the Ballance. Too often the Convert renounced his Errors,—and then was led in Triumph, to read his Recantation at St. James's. By these various Means, the first Class of the Nation threw themselves into Disgrace and Servitude.—Let us see, if that Portion of Integrity, which they lost, became totally annihilated, or whether, being expelled by Men of the first Rank, it received an Asylum in those of the second. Alas ! my Countrymen, in this treacherous Feast, which was provided for ye, every Body partook, for every Palate was con-

sulted—from the Peasant up to the Duke ; we were all supplied with what could best compleat our Ruin ; add to this the prevalence of Example, and we may easily account for the Corruption of the Multitude ; different indeed, but similar in their Effects, were the Means made use of. If Gaming-houses and Brothels, Tilts and Tournaments were opened for the Seduction of Youth, an equal Regard was paid to the Appetites of Age. St. James's became a public Warehouse, where every Thing was supplied, and Virtue taken in exchange : There were Titles for Ambition hung up in one Corner—and Places for Indigence hung up in another,—The Credulous were supplied with Promises—The Vain with Smiles, and all with Ruin. Irksome indeed must it be to a liberal Mind, to find all this too true ; but whoever contemplates the different Departments into which Mankind must naturally be



be divided, will find the great Majority of each, in this Kingdom, to be wholly employed in an unworthy Attachment to Self-gratification.—Human Nature has been turned out of her Course. Blindfolded by Folly, she has been led out of that Path, in which, under the Guidance of Virtue and Wisdom, her Progress had been free and happy. Our Nobility, placed on an Eminence among the People, instead of supporting the Dignity of their Station, are become a Shame and Disgrace to it. Our young Noblemen are Jockies, Whoremasters and Spendthrifts, while those advanced in Years are repairing the Waste of their Youth, by a shameful Plunder of the Public. No more the jealous Guardians of our Rights, our Commons are turned into a Den of Thieves and public Spoilers—hired as Assassins, they have improved on their Profession, and dared to stab their Country in the Face of Heaven. Confident

in those who made them, when their End arrives, they return to a Power as corrupt as themselves, and receive a new Existence—but a far different End will one Day or other arrive to all of them—a parting Day will come, in which “a dread of something “after Death” will change their Confidence into Fear, and make them shudder at the Thought, of being brought up before a Judge, who though merciful, is just.—If this be construed Preaching, let me claim Forgiveness of my Lords the Bishops, for having intruded on their Province—The many Lessons they inculcate, both by Precept and Example, render those of others a mere work of Supererogation—Their zealous Opposition to the Canada Bill, which has, in despite of their Lordship's, established Popery and arbitrary Power, in Part of the British Dominions, point them out as a strong Tower, in defence of Liberty and the Protestant Religion—By their  
Disregard

Disregard to even the Comforts, not to mention the Luxuries of Life; the growing Voluptuousness of the Age, is checked and kept down.—“ Bloated, indeed they are—for Fasting is a windy Recreation”—If any Man should say, they were a purfy pedant Bench, over the real Features of whose Character, a Veil of Lawn was spread—a Set of foundered Hulks, who depended on their Rigging for the Way they make—a Class of Men, whose Heaven is in this World—I should say (if this be true) with the Apostle, “ wo, unto ye, “ Hypocrites, ye outwardly appear righteous unto Men; but within, ye are full “ of Hypocrisy and Iniquity.”

With regard to the administration of Justice, perhaps Questions of private Right and Wrong, may be still justly decided; but we have seen the most shameful subversion of our Laws, in Points wherein the whole  
Com-



Community has been affected—Under the most arbitrary Governments, where Interest is silent, Justice is allowed to speak; and except where a Victim is to be sacrificed to Power, or a Principle friendly to Freedom to be overturned, she is suffered quietly to take her Course.—In whatever Point of View we take the Character of L\*\*\* C\*\*\* J\*\*\*\*\* M\*\*\*\*\*, a Propensity to Evil appears so strongly interwoven with it, as not to justify the Imputation of a worthy Motive, to any one Action of his Life. His Enormities are indeed so many, and so great, as to have furnished the Mind with new Ideas of Detestation. The utmost extension of his Abilities, the utmost exertion of his Power, have ever tended to subvert Principles favourable to Liberty, and to transfer to the Bench, the judicial Privileges of the People,—his unwarrantable Attacks on the Liberty of the Press,—his Invasion of the constitutional Rights of Juries,

Juries, will bear ample Testimony in support of the Assertion—As a Minister, he has taken that mean, low, serviceable Part, which entitles him to no mark of Resentment above Contempt, “ far from the “ Virtues, he possesses, not even the Vices “ of a great Man”—Replete with Cruelty and Cowardice, which ever go together, he forges the deadly Weapons, and gives them with a trembling Hand, to those who are more daring in the Enterprize.—The Seals will probably soon be held by either the A\*\*\*\*\* or S\*\*\*\*\* G\*\*\*\*\*; the Merits of these two Gentlemen, I confess, appear so equal, that it would embarrass me much, which Candidate to prefer—Whether determined P\*\*\*\*\*n, or smiling F\*\*\*\*\*d, can most benefit Society, must be left to the Decision of the best of Princes.—It may not now, be amiss to take some View of the mercantile Body of this Kingdom—The Principles and Intrigues of

Commerce, have in their own Nature, a Tendency to hurt the Mind, and by their continual Operation, are too apt to make Advantage its leading Principle; from this Cause, and a Want of Leisure for Cultivation, this Class of Men are generally in the State, a Body more useful than distinguished.—However, from that Liberality of Sentiment which a free Constitution infuses into the Mind of a People, the Merchants of England have, at many Periods, shewn themselves active in support of Liberty. Had so wealthy a Part of the Nation filled the Loans of Charles I. the legal Levy of Money would probably have been entirely laid aside; but in the Alteration, which the whole System has suffered, this Part has also undergone its Change; and we find a Turtle or Contract at this Day, as efficacious in one Channel, as a Title or a Place are in another. The  
City



City of \* London is indeed in itself too great and powerful to be reduced to a sure and permanent State of Servitude; but so long as it experiences the Attention, and good Offices of Government, we have no Reason to think it will merit the Imputation of Ingratitude. In the other commercial Cities of the Kingdom, where, by being more retired from the Bustle of the World, Characters are less mixed, and of course distinguished with more Ease, it is curious

\* I would not wish to have it understood, that I mean to cast general Reflections.—It is my Intention, solely to confine myself to those, who have Baseness and Folly enough to sell their Birthright for a Mess of Potage. I confess, and with real Pleasure acknowledge, that the City of London boasts of Characters of a very different Complexion—Men of steady and unshaken Principles, with a firm Attachment to the Interests of their fellow Citizens and an honest Love for their Country in general; and I will further declare, that when any flattering Hopes of a Reformation in the State presents itself to my Fancy, it is to those Men I chiefly look up, as being the most likely to accomplish such a Plan.

E

enough

enough to select one of them for Observation. The Merchant there, grown rich and consequential, must needs support that Government, under which he himself has prospered so well. Having laboriously studied his Paper, on a Post-day, pregnant with Paragraphs, he goes on 'Change to be delivered, where he finds every Body in Labour, as well as himself.—Having settled the Nation, his next Care is his Turtle, succeeded by his digesting nap, which finishes the Business of the Day.

The Gentlemen of our Army seem to have forgotten, that the Character of a *mere Soldier* is, in these Kingdoms, unknown to the Laws or Constitution, a character the exclusive Growth of a despotic Soil, and which, from neither enjoying a Freedom of Thought or Action, is surely the most contemptible in Nature. An Engine of Terror produced by Necessity, in absolute

Mo-

Monarchies, the main Principle of whose Constitution, is that of governing by Fear ; —but in a Land of Freedom, where every Part should be held together, by the sacred Cement of Love and Liberty, Instruments so dangerous and hateful, are not supposed to have Existence. When his Country and its Laws are to be defended, the Citizen assumes the Soldier, nor in taking up the one does he lay down the other ; while supporting this joint Character, the End of his Service, is the Benefit of the Community—He is indeed under the immediate Controul of the executive Power—a Trust committed by the People, both from Motives of Con-  
 veniency, and a liberal Confidence, that it will not be misused ; but I believe no Man will deny, that were a Body of the Army ordered out To-morrow, to an unwarrantable Massacre of their fellow Subjects, or any other unlawful Outrage, they would be legally justified in refusing to obey.



Whether they would exercise this Right, I shall not take on me to determine; I hope they would, but at the same Time, I regret that a Class of Men, who have so often, by their Bravery, preserved the Liberties of their Country, imbibe at present, a set of Principles, which have a very contrary Tendency.—Our Navy, ever held in higher Estimation, as being the natural Defence of the Kingdom, and less the Object of Jealousy, as not being able to do us so much Mischief, seem at present in common with the Army, rather too regardless of what Services they are sent upon.—Possessing, as it were, the Temper of game Cocks, they readily engage those with whom they are pitted, though perhaps they are going to spill a father's Blood, or that of a Brother or a Son. A certain Degree of Opinion or Free Agency, should exist in every Constitution of Men, under a Government that is free; and although in the Military, and Maritime

Maritime States, this may appear less necessary, from the nature of their Province, or may at first Sight appear dangerous, from the evil Consequences attending an Abuse of it, yet without it, neither can their Honour be maintained, nor the Safety of the Nation be secure: Without this Power of Discernment, the Wishes of the People may be changed into the Wishes of the Prince, and handed down through the false Medium of the one, be implicitly received, as the real Intention of the other. In the Reign of Charles I. the Minister had promised to furnish Lewis with a naval Armament, to assist against the Huguenots of France; a Service at that Time highly repugnant to the Wishes of the English Nation; and we find, that as soon as their Destination became known, the whole Squadron remonstrated to their Commander, who immediately sailed them back into the Downs, and made this remarkable

Decla-

Declaration, That he would rather be hanged in England for Disobedience, than fight against the Wishes of his Country and his Brother Protestants in France. This Transaction not only received the Approbation of the People at large, but also that of the Parliament, then sitting; and having happened many Years before the Disturbances broke out, exhibits a strong Proof, that this Step was thought consonant to the Principles of the Constitution.

And now, my Countrymen! Let me, as one of yourselves, who has neither written for Praise nor Profit—neither with a Design to deceive—nor with a Baseness to betray:—Let me, I say, entreat ye, in the most serious Manner, to turn your Thoughts on your own present Situation; neither credit what comes to you from one Side, nor what is suggested to you by the other, but appeal



to Facts, which afford the truest Testimony. The Marks which indicate the Degree of Honour and Security a Nation possesses, are few, but conspicuous. Those who would tell you, that this Knowledge lies within a tangled Skein of State Refinements, not to be unravelled by the People, have an Interest in deceiving you, and like the Oracles of old, assume a Mystery to disguise their Falshood.—If a Nation neither commands Respect Abroad, nor enjoys Tranquility at Home, it does not require the Aid of Logic to conclude, that her real Interests are betrayed.

If a Profusion of Places, Pensions and Honours (as they are called) are notoriously never conferred, but on stipulated and dishonourable Conditions, we must inevitably conclude, that Measures forced to have Recourse to such Means for Support, cannot have a virtuous Tendency in themselves.

If

If the Taxes on the Subject are become a Burthen, and the Means of easing the Load are lessening every Day, we may reasonably suppose, that Corruption has produced the one, and Mismanagement the other.— If these Inferences be true, and we are justified in applying them to Ourselves, it follows, that we owe it to our Country, our Honour, our Security—to present and to future Ages,—immediately to repair the Waste—and by a timely Assistance, to ward off what else we may too soon feel, and too late be able to prevent.—Hurried on by a Selfishness, which defeats itself, we have engaged in a cruel War, neither commenced in Justice, nor founded upon Policy.—We see a wanton Expenditure of our Property, and a prodigal Effusion of our Blood, without the most distant Prospect of reaping any Advantage—It is at this Day useless to recapitulate the Merits of the Dispute.— The Mind, not open to what has been already

ready

readily said, must be bigotted to Error, and like a religious Fanatic, be only more strongly confirmed by being further urged. But let us reflect, that we are endeavouring to deprive others of that, in the Defence of which, our virtuous Ancestors have often shed their blood: That America has been a Source of Revenue to this Kingdom, a Support to its Navy, and an Assistant in its Wars. All which, we are on the Brink of losing; and what is still more to be regretted, the Friendship of a Nation, which was not bound to us alone by Policy, but by the generous Tie of Inclination. With whom we were connected on a firm, favourable footing, like *one friendly Family*, which happened to be separated; but between whom an Intercourse subsisted, advantageous and affectionate.—It is by the loss of a Good, that we become acquainted with the Value of it; a Maxim which perhaps in a few Months, we Ourselves shall

F

prove,



prove, by becoming the Example; but even leaving an Anxiety for the Rights of Mankind out of the Question, from Motives of Self-Interest, we ought to wish Success to those, whom we now oppose; for, if Liberty is destroyed abroad, the Remnant we have left at Home will not be saved. What an unfortunate Alternative then, are we reduced to.—Either a gradual Decay, or an immediate Servitude.

In this Picture I have given ye of the Nation, I am conscious, the Colouring may be bad, but I trust, the Characters are in Proportion; my Purpose is then answered, which was, to give you a Knowledge of Yourselfes; and my Wishes will be compleat, if ye turn it to your Use. It was by no Means my Intention, to wander out of the Road in which my Business lay, in Search of beautiful Prospects.—This is not a Time to amuse, but a Period to alarm.—

Cor-

Corruption and Luxury have carried us so far, that we are scarce within the Boundaries of Reformation.—It has been the concerted System of late Years to attack the Morals of Men, and by attaching their Minds to narrow and unworthy Regards, produce an Unconcernedness what became of their more valuable Interests.—When the Sentiments of a Nation have been once contracted, it is a Matter of Difficulty to enlarge them; such a State of Disease is not to be overcome with Palliatives; and it has been the Opinion of many Writers, that a Remedy alone lies in some great and national Calamity, a dreadful Relief, accompanied with so severe a Punishment,

Let us then make a speedy Exertion, and remove, if possible, the Mischief, to prevent the Remedy—if we are not resolved to make a shameful Surrender, of what in reality we have no Right to give away, let

us lay our Hands to work, and while it may be yet within our Power, repair the injured Frame of the Constitution, ere it arrive to such a State of Ruin, as not to be within the Power of Amendment. If that Period comes, we must either have a new one made for us, or we must make one for ourselves. The Shame and Misery attendant on the one, the Danger and Distresses inseparable from the other, surely point out the Necessity of guarding against both.

The Causes to which our present Situation may be attributed, are a Want of real Information in the Prince, and a Defect of Duty in the People—In the first Place, to gain an effectual Access to Majesty, has been ever a task of Difficulty, and the Reasons held out for this unnatural Estrangement between a Father and his People, have been that Respect and Safety, are by this Mean best acquired. A Mean, unnecessary



cessary for the End, was the Mind of Roy-  
 alty always pure, and the Designs of Mini-  
 sters always charitable. Safety should flow  
 from Love, and Worth should create Re-  
 spect: Was there a liberal and an immedi-  
 ate Intercourse, between a Sovereign and his  
 Subjects—were not Thrones imprisoned,  
 and were not the People kept aloof, we  
 should find a mutual Confidence take Place  
 in the Room of Jealousy and Distrust—We  
 should find the chief Magistrate, from being  
 no longer deceived or misinformed by the  
 partial Few who surround him, acting for  
 the Good of the Whole; and thus a System  
 of Harmony established, productive of Ho-  
 nour and Advantage to every Part which  
 composed it. With such a free Communi-  
 cation between a People and their Prince,  
 we should not find the one prodigal in  
 Abuse, nor the other plundered with Impu-  
 nity—We should not find Thrones, which  
 were made for the General Good, by the  
 People,

People, become a Party against their Benefactors, and committing every Outrage, to make the World more wretched.—With regard to the latter—the public Eye should be ever fixed upon the Throne.—Those who are continually basking in the Sun-shine of their Prince's Favour, should be watched with Wariness, and made afraid to counsel, but with Caution, and with Candour.—Our Commons, to whom we delegate a Trust of the most sacred Nature, should be taught to know, that they are not to carry the Rights of their Constituents to public Market, and there barter them, with Impunity for their own Emolument. The Constitution is the Property of the People.—The meanest Man amongst us has his Share, and acts a dishonest Part, when he relinquishes the Care of it.—That we lie under this Imputation, we should be ashamed to own, but that we do cannot be with Truth denied; what a ridiculous Scene do we behold exhibited every

every Day—One Man with a Demeanour of Distress tells you, “ The Constitution is “ certainly in Danger;” another, “ That “ our Trade is in Decay.”—Insufferable Taxation, is whispered into one Ear; and undue Influence into another; not a Dish of Coffee is taken without a Stricture; not a Paper read, without a Comment.—Let us, for a Moment, suppose a sensible Man to have lived a Number of Years within the Bounds of a comfortable Fortune, which enabled him to be happy and contented; but that, at last, notwithstanding the Remonstrances of his Friends, he had laid himself open to Seduction become a Dupe at Play, and of course a Beggar in a short Time. If this Man, thus ruined, had come to one of us, with bitter Complaints against those who had stripped him of his Property; the natural Answer we should give him, I imagine, would be this,—“ You lived “ for a long Time easy and comfortable.  
“ on



“ on a fortune which your Ancestors ac-  
 “ quired and left you unimpaired, and  
 “ which it was your Duty to hand down  
 “ to your Children, whom you will now  
 “ leave destitute of Support; you had Sense  
 “ enough to know the Value of what you  
 “ possessed, and were even warned where  
 “ your Enemy lay; wherefore impute the  
 “ greater Share of Blame to yourself, and  
 “ know, that such Men as you are the na-  
 “ tural Prey of those to whom you have  
 “ fallen a Sacrifice, and that if they have  
 “ some Excuse, you certainly have none.”

In like Manner, if we have suffered our  
 dearest Rights to be violated, our Means  
 of Welfare to be endangered—if we have  
 tamely looked on and seen the sacred Fabric  
 of Liberty stripped, not only of its Orna-  
 ments, but its Supports; with what Justice  
 can we complain of having been ill used?  
 and how unworthy and unmanly is it, when  
 we have lost, what we were either too timid

or too slothful to take Care of,—

——“ to unpack my Heart with Words,

“ And fall a cursing, like a very Drab.”

It may be well asked, then—“ What is  
“ to be done? All moderate Forms of Re-  
“ dress, have in vain been had Recourse to.  
“ The Prayers of the People have been  
“ turned into Jest and Merriment. Far from  
“ being granted, our Petitions have not  
“ even been considered, and when we  
“ hoped for Redress, we have found our  
“ Injuries encreased, by being heaped with  
“ Insults. Our Representatives in Parlia-  
“ ment, have been warped from their Duty  
“ by undue Influence, and are now reduced  
“ to such a systematic Manage, as renders  
“ any Expectation from them, a Hope  
“ forlorn in itself, This is an Evil which  
“ we know from Experience, General  
“ Elections are unable to remove, because  
“ those Boroughs which return the repre-

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“ sentative

“ sentative Majority, have from their con-  
 “ fined and narrow Constitution, become, as  
 “ it were, private Properties, dependant in  
 “ their Operation, and subject to the con-  
 “ tinual Influence of a Set of Men, whose  
 “ Interest and Safety depend upon their  
 “ being kept so. In the Reign of the  
 “ *Stewarts*, the Representatives of the  
 “ People were the Friends of the People ;  
 “ and we were able to preserve the Con-  
 “ stitution from Waste by opposing the  
 “ Virtue of one Branch of the Legislature  
 “ against the Innovations of another ; but  
 “ this is not the case at present—From the  
 “ harmony existing between the dif-  
 “ ferent Branches, every Measure, how-  
 “ ever unconstitutional, operates with the  
 “ confidence and Sanction of Legality.—  
 “ We are played off against Ourselves—  
 “ and no Remedy or Power of Restitution  
 “ remains but that last and dreadful one,  
 “ to which every good Citizen must refer  
 “ with



“ with Tears and Reluctance, and rather  
 “ than appeal to which, every good Man’s  
 “ Sufferance will undergo the forest Trials.  
 “ Without having Recourse then to this  
 “ Remedy, which might prove worse than  
 “ the Disease, we must remain content  
 “ with our Condition ; and perhaps in so  
 “ doing, we shall have made the wiser  
 “ Choice—We shall not be worse off than  
 “ our Neighbours, who though neither  
 “ rich nor respected, enjoy however, from  
 “ the Nature of their Government, one  
 “ inestimable Blessing;—that of public  
 “ Tranquility.”

This is a View of our Situation, which may  
 naturally enough occur to many well-mind-  
 ed Men—for human Nature is not in gene-  
 ral disposed to part with even small Advan-  
 tages which are present, in expectation of  
 greater ones, which are remote. It is to  
*those men* then, I would wish to address  
 G 2 myself.

myself. I would wish to convince them, that there are some Cases in which the Exercise of even the mildest Virtues, are not only ill placed, but may justly incur the imputation of Criminality. Cases, in which Moderation is Pusillanimity, and in which Philosophy is Sloth. The Advancement of Wealth and Luxury in a State, not only creates bad Men, but produces an Indolence and Self-security in the Minds of even the most Virtuous; by far this the greater Evil of the two; because, so long as that active and jealous Principle which should pervade the Members of a free Constitution exists, the Designs of bad Men are perceived and prevented from being carried into Execution. As the preservation of this Principle is the Security, so its Decay is the inevitable Destruction of a free State. So long as the spirit of Liberty is only kept down by Violence, it is sure to recover its Tone, when the Oppression, by any lucky Circumstance, may

may be removed ; but where it becomes extinguished by Luxury, or deprived, as it were, of this, its elastic Force, no Means of Recovery exists, the vital Principle being destroyed.

Thus Thraſybulus and Epaminondas were enabled to reſtore their reſpective States to Freedom and Power ; becauſe although Liberty had been ſuppreſſed, yet the Spirit of it ſtill remained. On the contrary, Phocion and Demoſthenes failed, becauſe Corruption had extinguished public Virtue, and the Spirit of Freedom, through the Means of Luxury, had been converted into Licentiouſneſs and Servility. It may perhaps be not unjuſt to obſerve, that many eſtabliſhed deſpotic Monarchies, poſſeſs a better Proſpect of enjoying Liberty than a free State does in its Decline. The glorious Stand made ſome Years ago by the Parliament of Paris, againſt the Impoſitions of

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the Crown, prove two Points beyond a Doubt; the one is, that the People submit to their Chains, but with Reluctance; the other, that they are kept on by the sole Means of a powerful standing Army. If then by any Accident or Peculiarity of Circumstances (to which all human Affairs are subject) the Disposition of this Army should undergo a Change or its Strength suffer a Diminution, the present Government would probably be overturned, and one substituted in its Place more conducive to the Happiness of Mankind, and more consonant to the Principles of Freedom: how different such a Situation of Affairs to that existing in the Decline of a free State. The Flame, which in the first Case is only stifled, but ready to burst forth on any Vent being given; in the other, gradually goes out and leaves behind a mere inert Mass, incapable of Resuscitation, and ready to receive the deepest Impressions of Servitude. But to return. Let

us enquire, if by remaining content with our Condition, and acquiescing in our present Situation, we can in the first Place, act with Honour to Ourselves ; and in the next Place faithfully discharge the Duty we owe Posterity, by neither endangering their Happiness nor Welfare. If these are found to be incompatible with each other, let us next enquire, what Means of Restitution are within our Power, and whether any Remedy is practicable, without supplanting one Disease with a worse.

In reading the Histories of Nations, why are we induced to give the Preference to our own ? We are a conquered Nation—We are indebted to the Ingenuity of Foreigners for a great Part of our Knowledge in Trade and Manufactures. Our Climate is not so good as that of many other Countries—Our natural Temper is not the liveliest in the World—Our Polish is not the finest—

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Our Morals are not the best—our Soil is not the richest—what then is it? which, without the Imputation of Partiality, justifies the holding our own Country in the highest Estimation? It is, I will say, without a Fear of Contradiction. The peculiar Excellence and Freedom of our Constitution, it is, that Liberty has ever dwelt amongst Us as a welcome Guest, that we “ have worn her “ in our Heart’s Core,” protected her in danger, and rejoiced with her in Peace. This is the Feather on which we have plumed ourselves for Ages. That national Character which has supported us, in reaching this distinguished Point, has been the Badge of Honour we have worn; shall we then, by throwing this off, reduce Ourselves to the low Level of those whom we still affect to hold so cheap? shall we become the Instruments of our own Disgrace, by joining in the *damned Plot*?

“ In



" In such a one, as we consenting to 't,  
 " Must bark our Honour from the Trunk we bear,  
 " And leave us naked!"—

The Duty we owe Posterity, is of that sacred Nature, that admits of no Abatement—We are bound to them by the Ties of Religion and Morality, of Integrity and Humanity. Those who immediately succeed us, have the additional Claims of paternal Fondness and Protection—Shall we then be deaf to all these Calls? and disregard the Welfare of even the Child to whom we have given Existence? From the Mouths of how many, do we hear this illiberal Sentiment come forth!—" The Constitution will last our Time, and let Posterity take Care of themselves."—But I would tell such Drones in Society, that though totally unconcerned about those who may succeed them, they are committing a Robbery on Posterity—making an unjusti-

frable Use of a Trust reposed—and alienating, as it were a Property, of which they are only Tenants during Life.—That with regard to Posterity taking Care of themselves, they will not have the Power left to do it.—The Business will be done ere it reaches them, to whom a bitter Inheritance will be transmitted, a Monument of the Shame and Infamy attending those who have suffered its Adulteration.—With regard to the Means of Retitution, we may still have left. It is a Subject serious in itself, demanding an honest Attention and a well-tempered Resolution.—A People obliged from Necessity, to appeal in some Measure, to themselves, and to become their own Physician, should chuse with Caution, and take the greatest Care, not to hurt the Constitution in the Cure.—Let no Man say, that in asserting the Cause of good Government, I mean to sow Sedition—Insupportable as the Shackles of Slavery may appear to me,

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as an Individual, I doubt whether I should call an enslaved Nation to shake off their's, at the Expence of horrid Civil War. We feel the Effects of *a partial one* too severely at present to wish it ever should spread farther. In a Nation possessed of a perfect and avowed Knowledge of its Rights, no Revolution can be attended with much civil Commotion; because here is an *allowed Standard*, by which every Question must be measured—Our own History furnishes us with a strong Example: The Revolution, which dethroned Charles I. threw the Nation into a general Convulsion, because each Side had Claims undetermined and unascertained;—whereas the Dethronement of James II. proved a Matter of easy Operation, and was effected, as it were, by the common Course of Law—the Reason is plain, because in Consequence of the progressive Information of the People, the Nation was now directed by, allowed, authorized, and certain



Principles—At this Day, how much more perfect are we in this respect; and were a Revolution necessary, there is another Circumstance, which must ever sweeten the Labour with a chearful Hope; and that is, that as Revolutions in other Countries have almost universally ended where they began, in England, they have ever terminated in the Security of the common Rights of Mankind. It is to the free Spirit of the People of England, that the House of Hanover owes its present splendid Situation. It possesses a Crown, the *bright Reward* of Revolution Principles; one distinguished from all others; one raised by Freedom and supported by Love. Let us then not sully its Lustre, by sinking into Servitude—If we regard our Sovereign, we shall shew our Loyalty, by preserving to him the Dominion of *a free State*. The Rule of Slaves, is mistaken Dignity; hateful from the Means

of

of its support, and insecure from the Principles of its Foundation,

Luxury has been the Bane of all free States; it consists in the inordinate Gratification of the sensual Passions, which from Indulgence, become insatiable. This debases the Mind, eradicates every Principle of Honour, and begets an Expence which no private Fortunes can sustain. A want of Means, being thus accompanied by a loss of Virtue, the Wages of Corruption are received without the smallest Hesitation.

The Seeds of Avarice and Venality, which are inherent in the Human Soil, wait but for this golden Shower to bring them forth; their Advancement to Maturity is rapid; and unless their Growth be early checked, they naturally arrive at exuberant Perfection. When Corruption reaches this last Stage—When those Ex-

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cesses,

cesses, which were at first but the *Vices*, at length, from *Habit*, become the *Manners* of the People, the Distemper may be deemed incurable. A People so sunk, look upon those who would relieve them, as their greatest Enemies. Cato, who found *Rome* in this Situation proposed a Law against the Practice of Bribery and Corruption at Elections; his Reward was the Repentment of the *Rich*, who were only able to arrive at Dignities through the Means of Wealth; and being pelted, and abused by the Electors, because such a Law tended to deprive them of the Wages of Corruption, and obliged them to have Recourse to Industry and Labour for Subsistence,

Let us not then have a fatal Confidence in Ourselves. We are deviating by Degrees from our Constitution, without being well aware where we are going. Accompanied by the Retinue of Luxury, our Journey  
carries



carries with it the Air of a pleasurable Party, and we vainly think that however distant our Excursions, we shall be able to return, when it may seem dangerous to proceed. But we are taught by the Experience of Ages, to know, that the Fact is otherwise, and that as soon as the Effects of Luxury have reached a certain Point, a national Inability takes Place, and all Powers of Restoration become lost: That we are approaching this Point is too evident to be denied; that we should endeavour by every honest Means, to prevent our Arrival, I hope will strike us *all*.

If we give ourselves the Trouble to compare, we shall find, that our national Character has suffered a material Change, and some Consequences have already arisen, serious and alarming in themselves. That the Independance of Parliament, on which our very Existence, as a Free State, depends,

has

has been totally destroyed. That the present venal Majority in the House of Commons, neither represent the Nation, nor the Sense of the Nation; that they are returned, for the most Part by what are called the Rotten Burroughs, Bodies too confined to be free; most of which are either at the absolute Disposal of the Minister, or under the immediate Influence of some great Men, who sell them like any other Chattel, for the most, that they can bring; that by this means a set of Men returned by a few Hundreds, and those corrupted too, have the property of a Body of Seven Millions, at their entire Disposal. Nay, that our Situation is not even so favourable as this; for, that those very Men, thus packed into the Lower House of the Legislature, are, from the Terms on which they sit, and the Bargains they contract, mere passive Instruments, to the Will of the Premier, and that the Ballance of the People, which is placed

placed in the Right of granting or withholding Supplies, is thus totally destroyed. So that a ——— of G—— B—— may now hold the Purse of the Nation in one Hand, and fill his own out of it with the other. When we consider these and other Abuses, which have already taken Place, we must be convinced, that our Security and Honour, depend on their Correction.

If we do not in Time apply some healing Remedy, the Wound will have reached a mortal Part, and then we may take our *last farewell*. Indeed, the Task is an arduous One, for we have first ourselves to prepare. We must work a Revolution in our Minds, and make Virtue popular. If we can accomplish *this*, we shall be able to accomplish *any thing*.—Actuated by a virtuous Principle, Seven Millions of People, are not to be defeated in their Purpose.



Let us no longer hold Wealth in Estimation, and Poverty in Disesteem ; but let Integrity be the Standard of Respect. Warned by the Examples of other States, let us profit by the Lesson, and learn to preserve our own.—This is not the Language of a Partizan, but the Admonition of a Friend—Of a Man, to whom *his Country* is dear ; where he would wish to spend his Days as a *Freeman*, but will not, as a *Slave*—of One, among Thousands, who are but waiting for the Determination of this Country, which must soon be made ; and, who in Case it be a Surrender of the Constitution, will offer up Thanks to the Great Author of all Blessings, who has opened to them a new World, whither they may go and end their Days in *Security and Freedom*.

The Question still results,—Supposing we should be inclined to exert ourselves,  
what

what Method have we to pursue? In Answer to this, I would wish to be perfectly understood. My Station amongst ye, my Countrymen, is humble; my Views, however, I trust, are honest. I neither want to raise Disturbance at home, at a Time in which we are so deeply involved abroad, nor as I have Declared to ye, before, should I wish to purchase almost any Benefit at so very dear a Cost.—But I think by a sincere and steady Attention, we have it in our Power, without occasioning the least Commotion, to do ourselves an infinite and essential Service, and surely upon those Terms, no Man who thinks liberally, will withhold his Assistance. The first and great Point, to be obtained, is *to collect a thorough Sense of the Nation.*

I have annexed to this Letter, the best Mode, which according to my Judgment, I have been able to form in order, to effect it;

and having contributed in Proportion to my Ability, I feel the Satisfaction, that I have discharged my Duty.

Conscious, however, of the narrow Circle, within which my Powers are confined, I lament that such as are more able to do Good, are not more ready to come forward. To those deserted but deserving Men who are still labouring for the public Weal, I look up with Gratitude and Admiration. I esteem them for their Constancy, and blush to see them unsupported—As it were a few remaining Sparks, they just keep public Virtue from Extinction, but are unable to produce that Flame which should diffuse a general Warmth. If Men could be induced but to extend their Thoughts, and revive that jealous Spirit of Inquiry, on which, in a great Measure, their Security depends, they would behold with a Degree of Astonishment, the Abuses which during their political



litical Absence, had been committed, they would find, that wrapped up in Self-security, they had hitherto slept upon their Posts, and at length awakened by a Sense of Danger, they would be convinced, that an honest Exertion was become indispensable for their Safety.

I cannot impute to Englishmen, a wicked and wilful Surrender of their Liberties. A Want of Vigilance, has been, I hope, our greatest Crime. Let us then, while it may be yet within our Power, redeem our Characters, by returning to our Duty, and thus prevent the Completion of a System, which must else reduce us to a State of abject Slavery.



I HOPE neither to be taxed with Folly nor Arrogance, in submitting the following Plan to the consideration of the Public.

I am not ignorant that a Man must acquire the Confidence of the People, before he can lay Claim to their Attention, and for that Purpose, be well approved both as to his Intentions and Abilities. An unnoticed Individual will therefore find his feeble Efforts attended only with a small Share of Regard, yet he ought not, on this Account, to be deterred from adding in some Degree to the common Stock. Those who withhold, because they cannot give in Abundance, mistake their Duty. Did every Man contribute according to his Power, the Aggregate would command respect.

It appears to me, that the Lower House of the Legislature being the first Object of  
our



our Attention (because it is that Part of the Constitution in which the most active Powers are lodged, and which has deviated the farthest from the Ends of its Institution,) we should endeavour,

1st, To promote *more frequent Elections*, which would tend to make the Representative more virtuous; for his Inducements to act honestly, will be thereby strengthened, as his Reward, which is the Approbation of and being rechosen by his Constituents, will happen more frequently.

2dly, *A more equal Representation*; it being contrary to the Principles of the Constitution, that unrepresented Property should be taxed, or that Property should be unequally represented. Both these Abuses prevail, to remove them, the personal Property ought to have more Electors, and the landed, more elected. This may be effected,

ed, by opening and extending the confined Boroughs, and encreasing the Number of Knights of Shires,

3dly, *An effectual Exclusion of Placemen and Pensioners* (excepting those Few who may be necessary for giving Information to the House, &c.): The Establishment of this Point would tend to recover the Independency of Parliament, and by removing the Occasion of useless Places, extravagant Salaries, and a profuse Expenditure of secret service Money, relieve the People from a very heavy Contribution,

To obtain these three Points, on which, in a great Measure, the Restoration of the Constitution depends, let the Landholders of every Parish in each County meet in their respective Parishes, and deliberate thereon, their sense on which being known, let One in each be chosen for the Purpose

of representing it; these to meet at the capital Towns of their respective Counties, where each giving in the Sense of his respective Parish, the Majority shall be deemed to be the Sense of the County, bound to adhere to which, let *Nine* be chosen as a *standing County Committee*. From these *Nine* let there be *One* delegated for the Purpose of meeting the other *County Delegates*, at some appointed Place in London, seven Days before the opening of Parliament. This Meeting will consist of Fifty-two Members, by the Majority of which, the *Sense* of the landed Interest may be ascertained; and as the commercial Interest should be equally regarded, let a similar Plan be adopted in every trading Town throughout the Kingdom, excepting London, which should be represented by a Committee chosen out of the Livery.

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The *Sense* of each Interest being thus separately known, let them hold a Conference together. Should they agree upon all or any of these Points in Question, let them conjointly prefer a Petition to Parliament, on its first Day of Meeting, to originate a Bill to promote the same. If they find that the Commons refuse to comply with this the Desire of the Nation, let them go up to the Throne with a Petition for the Dissolution of that Parliament, should this be attended with the same Success, the Delegates of each Interest are then to return to their respective Committees, who receiving their Report, will communicate it to the Parish Representatives, by whom it will be conveyed to the People at large;—who taught by this Experiment, will know, that *in themselves alone is placed Redress.*

T H E E N D.

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T H E E N D.

